LODI VALLEY NEWS
Publicado em 03/07/2023 - 07:55

Public Policy, Affirmative Action, National Conference – 06/30/2023 – Sou Ciência

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Brazilian public universities have long been elitist and frequented by the middle and upper classes, white and urban, as a means of perpetuating the power of the dominant classes. Almost all of them were born from the projects of their regional elites, to train their children and technical and political cadres to continue leading the country. Although it was funded by the state, it was an instrument of class control and an indisputable social and racial marker. Although public, it served vested interests and development models that continued to concentrate income. They have also spearheaded the importation of foreign fads, cultural paradigms, and consumption patterns. The transformation that Brazil's public higher education system has recently undergone, thanks to social mobilization and progressive governments, is making it more pluralistic and democratic. This transformation took place thanks to a combination of factors that generated synergies among themselves and reshaped the system: the expansion of public functions; Campuses in new, previously disadvantaged areas (such as frontier regions, semi-arid regions, the Amazon, urban fringes); new courses and curricula and general and non-colonial perspectives; And the quota policy that we will discuss here.

Law 12.711/2012, known as the Quota Law for Admission to Federal Institutions of Higher Education (IFES), has completed 10 years and has been waiting since August last year for its evaluation and revision.

The Act established that 50% of vacancies at universities and federal institutes of education, science and technology be reserved for graduates of public schools, with half of these vacancies distributed to candidates with per capita household incomes equal to or less than 1.5 percent of the minimum wage and, sub-accounts for Black, Brown, and Aboriginal people, and in In 2016, it also added for people with disabilities.

Within 10 years, this positive policy started a silent revolution in society, promoting diversity in public universities, and more quality in the training of its students, as we have already explained here. The quota policy helps combat structural racism and all kinds of historical and persistent prejudices in Brazilian society.

Considering that the political moment to revise this law was not conducive at all, in light of the previous government's constant attacks on public education institutions and their academic community, a large part of teachers, students, and the population in general became apprehensive about the process of revising the law.

Now, after the election, the context is different. However, it is impossible not to consider the composition of Congress (the House of Representatives and the Senate), the most conservative and right-wing in the political spectrum. This, unfortunately, does not seem to contribute to a frank and progressive debate about the law.

According to a survey he conducted Brazilian Association of Black Researchers In collaboration with SoU_Ciência, there are 77 bills (PL) under processing in the legislature aimed at changes in the quota law. Broadly speaking, it is possible to classify these bills into three distinct categories, when we take the view of a country whose bill is based on combating racism:

1) Projects that propose broad changes in the rights of blacks, for example, an increase in the percentage of quotas for this category of the population, or student assistance for the most vulnerable groups, from the moment they enter the university course;

2) Projects proposing restrictive changes to blacks, even arguing for the abolition of racial criteria from the vacancy reservation system or banning heterogeneous identification commissions to validate self-declaration of color and race, recognizing that it is not possible to accurately determine who is black in Brazil because miscegenation. According to many ABPN thinkers and researchers, this is not true, because racism in the country is linked to the phenotype of the population, therefore, to determine the audience of politics, it is only necessary to pay attention to those who suffer from it. racism in Brazil; that it

3) Projects that do not focus exactly on the racial issue but, depending on how they are implemented, may increase or decrease the vacancies offered for blacks in institutions.

In the last legislature it was possible to realize that projects with restrictive characteristics moved faster than projects with broad characteristics, especially those aimed at removing the racial criterion from the quotas, leaving only the so-called

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social reserve.

Therefore, it is possible to realize that there is absolutely no resistance to the quota law, being well-accepted reservations for graduates of public schools, for people with low incomes or with disabilities. The attack was not on the quota system, but on the racial criterion contained in it and on the policy that controls the guarantee of black admission to universities. This clearly expresses the racism that seeks to hide the massive progress of the black population with the creation of Law 12711 – or as the black intellectual says Lilia Gonzalezthus preserving the country's ethnic democracy theater.

There are bills, within the scope of the 50% reserved places set forth in Code 12711, proposing an increase in the quota for people with disabilities, or even seeking to create a segment of it for Indigenous people in the state where IFES is located or for high-performance athletes. These are examples that end up affecting the percentage allotted to blacks.

It is clear that we support positive policies for all. However, it is necessary to protect and expand the law to promote the inclusion of blacks in universities. It is necessary to combat the setbacks proposed by some bills aimed at amending the quota law and discouraging harmful conflicts between right holders of university spaces.

In addition, it is necessary to expand the policy, ensuring that people entering universities have material conditions for survival, such as aid and scholarships.

Brazilian society needs to continue to follow this debate and movement in legislatures closely, because, As we have already shownSocial quotas alone are not enough to combat structural racism and promote an appreciation for diversity in our Brazil.

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